

LESSON 9 – “Creativity”

Ars longa, vita brevis.

Art is long; life is short. – HIPPOCRATES

Base Words

artifact	artless	ode	recant
artifice	depict	parody	rhapsody
artisan	incantation	pictograph	

ARS, ARTIS <Latin>“art”

1. **artifact** [**art** + *facere* <Latin>“to make”]

- n. An object made by human beings; often refers to a primitive tool or other relic from an earlier period.
In some distant future hula hoops and skateboards may become treasured **artifacts**.

2. **artifice** [**art** + *ficere* or *facere* <Latin>“to make”]

- n. 1. Craftiness; trickery.
In the fable about a crow and a pitcher, the crow’s **artifice** enables it to quench its thirst: it drops pebbles into the pitcher to raise the water level high enough to drink.
2. Cleverness; skill.
Dressing stylishly on a limited budget requires planning, imagination, and **artifice**.

3. **artless**

- adj. 1. Without deceit or cunning; natural; simple.
Because Miranda, Prospero’s daughter in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, has lived all her life on a remote island, she is **artless** in the ways of the world.
2. Crude; ignorant; uncultured.
The **artless** patrons at the movie theater left their trash on the floor by their seats.
Other Forms: **artlessness**, n.
Antonym: *artful*

4. **artisan**

- n. A skilled craftsperson.
George Hepplewhite was such a superb **artisan** that his furniture is still prized more than two centuries later.

AOIDE <Greek>“song”

5. **ode**

- n. A poem usually addressed to a particular person, object or event that has stimulated deep and noble feelings in the poet.
Beginning his **ode** with the line, “O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn’s being,” Percy Bysshe Shelley expresses admiration for the wind’s swiftness and power and asks it to scatter the poet’s words “among mankind.”

6. **parody** [*para* <Greek>“alongside” + **ode**]

- n. A humorous imitation of a piece of literature or music.
Ogden Nash’s **parody** of Joyce Kilmer’s “Trees” bemoans the ugliness of billboards in a humorous way:

I think that I shall never see
A billboard lovely as a tree.
Indeed, unless the billboards fall
I’ll never see a tree at all.

- v. To mimic a style, plot, or idea for comic effect.
Cartoonists sometimes **parody** contemporary political figures or events. *parodist*, n.

7. **rhapsody** [*rhaptein* <Greek> “to string,” “to stitch together” + **ode**]

n. Speech or writing expressing great pleasure or enthusiasm.

Visitors to the Grand Canyon often recount their impressions in a **rhapsody** of detail.

Other Forms: rhapsodic, adj.; rhapsodist, n.; rhapsodize, v.

NOTA BENE: The word rhapsody can also refer to a musical composition of irregular form. An example is George Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue,” which combines jazz and classical music.

CANTO, CANTARE, CANTAVI, CANTATUM <Latin> “to sing”

8. **incantation** [*in* <Latin> “in” + **cant**]

n. The chanting or speaking of words seeming to have magical power or used to create a magical spell.

The **incantation**, “Open, Sesame!” spoken in an *Arabian Nights* tale, derives from the magical powers associated with the sesame plant.

9. **recant** [*re* <Latin> “back” + **cant**]

v. To take back a formal statement or belief previously made known.

Although Galileo was convinced that the earth moves around the sun, he **recanted** this belief when it brought open conflict with the Catholic church.

Other Forms: **recantation**, n.

PINGO, PINGERE, PINXI, PICTUM <Latin> “to paint,” “to embroider”

10. **depict** [*de* <Latin> “from” + **pict**]

v. 1. To paint, draw, or express in a picture or sculpture.

The Bayeux Tapestry **depicts** the Battle of Hastings fought in 1066 between the Saxons and the Norman invaders.

2. To describe; to picture in words.

Jade Snow Wong **depicts** the life of a girl growing up in San Francisco’s Chinatown in her autobiography, *Fifth Chinese Daughter*.

11. pictograph [**pict** + *graph* <Latin> “a sharp-pointed tool for writing on waxen tablets”]

n. A picture or drawing representing words or ideas.

Pictographs on the walls of palaces in Yucatan have given archaeologists clues to Mayan mythology.

Other Forms: **pictographic**, adj.

Familiar Words

artificial	chant	pictorial	pigment
artistry	enchant	picturesque	

Challenge Words

artiste	cantata	chanteuse	monody
arty	canto	descant	prosody
cant	cantor	hymnody	